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[For information on purification rites and on social readjustments to death see categories 765 and 783--analyst]

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765 783 761 834 829 inner circle and will undergo a very rigorous purification ; the grave diggers come next ; then the inhabitants of the bereaved village, the relations residing in other villages, even the relatives of the wives of the deceased. All these being unclean are placed beyond the pale of society : "Muti wu tjumile," "the village is dark," is the technical expression. This marginal period lasts longer for those who are most affected ; one year and more for the widows, one month for the village, five or six days only for the mourners from outside. But there are many taboos in connexion with this period. Sexual relations are severely prohibited amongst married people, but the *gangisa* is not so strongly objected to, at any rate in some districts. We shall also meet with the aggregation rites by which re-entry into the ordinary mode of life is secured. The funeral rites may last for one year and are very complex. There are three great moments in the sequence of these rites : 1) *The Great Mourning* which lasts a few days, just after the burial, generally only five days. Here the purification is essentially medical and aims at cleansing the persons and the objects which were directly in contact with the deceased. 2) *The sexual rites* which tend to purify the collective life of the village by the removal of its defilement. 3) *The family rites*, consisting in gatherings of all the relatives, and accompanied by religious ceremonies. These seem to aim at restoring the life of the family, viz. of the social group, which has been diminished by the death of one of its members.

768 This general sequence is found in all the clans. But the rites themselves differ greatly ; I shall try to depict these differences clearly. My information is more complete as regards the Ronga clans, but I owe to Viguet some entirely new and very interesting material regarding the Hlabi rites.

IV. *The Great Mourning of the first five days.*

1) The Great Mourning amongst the Ba-Ronga.

764 783 [824] Just after the burial, all the inhabitants of the village go to the lake or the river to bathe. The grave-diggers nibble a *ndjoo*, the root of a juncus which has magical power. Special rites will then be performed for the widows. We shall describe

washed in the pool and which she will wear again for two days (1).

b) *The following days of the Great Mourning.* Without delay a new hut, a small provisional hut, is built in front of the mortuary one. Here the great wife will stay during the whole of her widowhood; the space between this and the old hut is more or less taboo and most of the possessions of the deceased are placed there, under the roof near the door on the outside. (See illustration p. 159.)

The other widows do not leave their huts, but they participate in the other purifying acts, the vapour baths and the general sprinkling of the fifth day. As regards the vapour baths, however, the first wife is associated with the grave-diggers, viz. she must be exposed to the strongest medicinal smoke, while the inferior wives are cleansed with weaker drugs. They all put on the *malopa* and eat with spoons during the whole year of widowhood.

c) *Provisional decision regarding the fate of the widows.* A few days after the Great Mourning, a fresh gathering takes place, not in connection with the defilement of death, which is now provisionally cleansed, but *to settle provisionally the fate of the widows.* The sisters of the deceased have to play a special part in this gathering. They will lead the discussion with the widows about their new husbands. It is indeed a happy custom to let women decide on the subject. Not that they have unrestricted power in the matter. The law has provided a certain rule for the distribution and this is seldom departed from. However, some liberty is allowed in its application, and modifications can better be made if proposed by female intermediaries. Should the husband possess a harem (tshengwe), that is at least five wives, they will most likely be given to the following heirs. The great wife, being "the pole of the

(1) *Widowers* also form a similar society and undergo the same rites; but just as it was only the great wife who was subject to these laws, to the exclusion of the little wives, so it is only when he has lost his first wife that a man is initiated into the widowers' society. After having buried her (he holds her head) he goes to the pool, washes himself, and another widower comes and makes the incision in him in the thoracic region. Then he throws away his *shifado* (Annotatio 1.) and also carries out the same crossing of the hut in tears. These three acts constitute the actual widower's mourning; the vapour baths and fokla khombo are part of his purification as being the principal grave-digger.

3[See category 11a --Analyst]

787 595 428 768 604 village," must remain in it and belongs to the younger brother (1) who becomes the master of the kraal. The second goes to the second brother, the third to the third, the fourth to the *ntukulu*, viz. to the son of the sister of the deceased. The fifth will then become the wife of one of the sons of the deceased. This may appear shocking, and is really shocking even to the ideas of the Natives ; but let it be remembered that she is the youngest of all ; she was taken when the father was already old, and the first son is perhaps older than she. As regards the elder wives, the first and second especially, no one would think of keeping them for the son! Incestuous relations are very rare amongst the [835] Ba-Ronga. Even in this case, the feelings of both parties are more or less respected. The men advise the son to begin to play with the young widow, to ask her jocularly for tobacco, and he gradually accustoms himself to consider her no longer as a mother (mamana) but as a wife (nsati).

587 595 428 768 Of course the general rule is apt to be very much altered according to circumstances. Should the deceased be the youngest of the family, his elder brother may inherit the first wife. But this is not the regular procedure.

The distribution having thus been decided on, the sisters of the deceased call the widows and say to them : "You so and so, you shall give food to so and so (phamela manyana)." But then the struggle begins. One of the widows, being old, may altogether refuse to have anything to do with any of her brothers-in-law. She may say : "I am taking my young son as a husband" which means : I do not want to be the wife of anybody. Or she will say : "I choose the big tree of the village where my late husband has built his hut." This answer may mean two things. Either : I do not leave this kraal and I will stay here without a husband ; or, on the contrary : I consent to be the wife of the man who becomes the headman of the village, viz. the eldest of the younger brothers. Another will say : "I love my *ntukulu* so and so." Should, however, the first wife desire to go to a man who does not

(1) Amongst the Ba-Ronga, an elder brother of the deceased cannot inherit a widow. It is taboo. He is a father to her, not a husband. He sometimes takes the lead in the discussion, having no personal interest in the matter. (See Part II).

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live in the village, the family council will certainly object strongly to her wish, as her departure would mean that the village would cease to exist. But in the case of the younger widows it is quite possible that an exception to the ordinary law would be allowed if they insisted upon choosing another husband (1).

After all, this is but a preliminary consultation, and the men who are rejoicing at the idea of getting new wives will perhaps be badly deceived later on, as we shall see. However the man provisionally chosen as the future husband of a widow, will at once pay visits to her, "march to her" (ku mu fambela), according to the technical expression.

765 783 833

d) *The casting away of misfortune.* But before any new and happy life can begin for the widows, they have still to go through a very hard trial. They must perform the *lahla khombo*, the throwing away of the malediction of death, and this is much more difficult for them than for the grave-diggers or the other members of the village. The main point in this strange act of purification is this ; before a widow can become the wife of her new husband, she must have sexual intercourse with another man whom she deceives. Should she succeed in freeing herself from him so that the act keeps its ritual character, s. n. i. (see Annotatio 2)[2], this man will take on himself the malediction of death, and she will be purified. On the contrary, should the man accomplish the whole act, the widow has failed and will return home with shame and in despair! Here is a description of this sad expedition of the widows. It takes place a few days after the gathering just described. The men of the village send the widows away, telling them : "Go and scatter (hangalasa) the malediction through the country and get rid of it before some other misfortune happens to us."

(1) What would happen should the widow choose a husband outside her husband's family? To the mind of a heathen woman the idea would never occur. But suppose a Christian widow, having only married unions, refuses to become their wife, her conscience forbidding her to contract a polygamic union. Her case would be very hard indeed, as I do not think her wish would be taken into consideration by heathen relatives. It would have to be brought before the White magistrate, who would probably try to help the widow. I think that, even if the woman consented to submit such family matters to the European court, she would have to give the *lobolo* or her children back to her brothers-in-law, and that might be an impossibility for her. It would be interesting to know how Native Commissioners proceed in such cases.

1[See p. 516 in these categories or in the -- Analyst]

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final fate will not be known before the last and most important act : the adjudication of the inheritance.

f) *The day of the adjudication of the inheritance.* This is a most typical ceremony prepared for with great care, because the day is full of surprises and dangers. Every precaution is taken to avoid misunderstanding, and to bring the mourning to a peaceful and satisfactory conclusion. It is winter time ; the mealies have been collected from the fields of the widows, the small cobs called *makunula* have been set carefully apart, as they have to be used especially to prepare the beer for the feast. The council of the family is again assembled and decides that the time has come. The divinatory bones are consulted. Should they be favourable, the ceremony can take place. The bones are again asked a number of questions : Who must take the mealies from the granary and put them in the pot to soften them in water ? (first operation of native beer making). A newly married woman who has had only one child is chosen by preference. Then it is asked how long this softening must continue ; who is to shout her *mikulungwane* to accompany the work ; who will have to get the mealies out ; which woman must give the first blow in the mortar to pound the softened mealies, etc.

All the relatives assemble in the mortuary village. One year has elapsed since the death, and the bitter feelings of mourning have passed. Nobody will miss the feast, certainly not the *batukulu*, viz., the nephews, sons of the sisters of the deceased. Some may be disappointed this day, but one of these nephews may return home richer than when he left! Most of the relatives arrive before the great day, to help in the preparation of the beer. When the woman designated by the bones has given the first blow, all her companions start at once pounding with vigour : "Ghe-ghe-ghe-ghe," and they sing songs of mourning. This is one of these songs, and a very significant one :

> Hi rile, hi rile! Hi ta ku yisi ku we, Hosi ndjani ?
> We are weeping, we are weeping ! What shall we say to thee, King !

This king is without doubt Heaven, the more or less personal being who kills or gives life, and whom we shall often meet with in these pages.

768
782 The first of the ceremonies of this day[1] is the sacrifice on the grave. The master of the mourning takes a pot of beer, and followed by the crowd, especially by the *batukulu*, goes to the place where the deceased has been buried. He stops there and prays : "See this jar of beer! We bring it to thee ; we have gathered to tear to pieces the mourning. We beseech thee that this ceremony may be performed in peace and good understanding." Then he pours a little of the drink into the cup which is on the grave, the same which the deceased used when alive. One *ntukulu* then takes the jar, which is still almost full, and drinks the contents with the other *batukulu*. This has been done calmly. But this act has made the *batukulu* bolder. They become troublesome. As soon as the crowd has come back from the grave, they steal another pot of beer. They insult the masters of the village. They say : "Why! You have never sent us any notice about the decisions concerning the mourning! We are tired! We will go and take our wives with us!" But some of the old men go to them and say : "Be good! Do not spoil the feast!"

By the end of the afternoon all the relatives assemble near the door of the mortuary hut, and bring the goats which they have given for the feast. Here the true sacrifice, the living offering, is made, very much in the same style as that described when treating of the crushing down of the hut (p. 158). The old man who prays, says : "See us here! We have come together to conclude our mourning. May there be no noise, no misunderstanding, no anger amongst the *batukulu*! This is our ox (the goat). It has been provided by so and so. Many others have been brought. See! You have died as a great chief!" At this very moment a *ntukulu* rises and begins to insult the old man who is praying : "You have no concern for us! Why do you leave us out ? You do not give us our wives! You are killing us!" And the other *batukulu* join in chorus. The end of the sacrifice and of the prayer is always the same in these big, religious, family gatherings of the Ba-Ronga : the *batukulu* steal the part of the victim set apart for the gods. The throng pursues them laughing, and pelts them with balls of *psanyi*.

[1] [i.e., the day of the adjudication of the inheritance --Analyst]

768 The sun is now setting. All the men go to the central place of
575 the village and sit round the fire. The widows remain on the
533 spot, between the deceased's hut and the new hut of the great wife, where all the belongings of the late husband have been kept during the whole year. The other widows of the family surround them once more ; no other woman is allowed to approach. The present ceremony is another secret rite of the company of widows. They sing the following mourning song to recall all the sufferings of the year of widowhood :

Angoma nkulukumba ! Tatana a nga fa, a ba siya
Na ngoma a nga si ha byela !
Our secret law is a great law ! Our father has gone, he has left them,
And he had not told them about that law !

768 During this song the old women take away all the clothing of
587 the widows, and wash their bodies. Then they lead them into the hut of the great wife and put on them new clothing, the clothes which their suitors and other relatives have brought for them. When they are all seated, the sisters of the deceased proceed to the last distribution. They first ask the great wife : "You, to whom do you belong ?" She answers : "Do you not know him ? It is the man who has taken care of me, who has been visiting me ! I choose so and so !" She may also say : "I kill so and so !" *(Ndji dlaya man)*. That means : "As I have killed my first husband, I might do the same for the second," a very promising declaration ! As soon as the widow has given her answer, the women in the hut begin shouting loudly, and one of them goes out to the men, and cries : "So and so says she kills so and so !" They proceed to ask another : "You, whom do you choose ?" The woman remains silent. "What do you mean ?" — "I do not choose anybody." — "How is that ? Be sensible !" — "No ! I do not want anybody !" — "Why ?" They begin to press her : "You know well who has taken care of you, who has visited *(hambela)* you the whole year." — "I do not want him !" — "How is that possible ?" — "No, I do not want him, I want the *ntukulu* so and so." A frightful noise is heard in the hut ; they are all shouting together. What has happened ?

587 Probably this widow was not pleased with the man to whom they
768 had destined her. Seeing more of him during the year, her affection had not increased. On the other hand, she had some liking for one of the *batukulu*, and she arranged secretly with him, and perhaps also with his mother, that she would keep silent till this day and then choose her nephew. It is quite possible that the mother of the *ntukulu* will say in that case: "Has this widow not been bought with the money which I secured for the family by my marriage?" Of course the official suitor objects strongly to this spoliation. He becomes angry. During a whole year he has given clothing to the ungrateful one. Things may grow so bad that the *ntukulu* carries off the fractious widow at once, saying: "Good-bye! I go with my wife!" The old men will then follow him and implore him to come back. If they see that the woman is quite decided, they will allow her to go to the husband of her choice. They had better consent to it at once, because it not infrequently happens that the *ntukulu*, if repulsed that day, will go to the family of the woman and claim the money *(lobola)* paid for her by her late husband, saying: "That *lobola* comes from my mother. If you do not give us our wife, if you allow her to stay with another man, then give us back the money." Or it may happen also that the widow, brought perforce to the house of a younger brother-in-law, will run away to the *ntukulu*, and the rightful husband will be helpless. There is a saying to this effect: "A woman inherited cannot be forced." Of course
587 such cases of conflicting interests cause a great deal of friction
578 between members of the family, and the Natives are much distress-
768 ed about it; they try to avoid it as much as possible. But the
428 desire of getting one more wife is so strong in the heart of a Ronga that such disputes are by no means rare, and the day of the adjudication of the inheritance is universally dreaded. However, they never go as far as fighting, and if an uncle and a nephew have parted from each other on bad terms, they will very likely try to mend matters by the sacrifice of reconciliation *(hahlelana madjieta)*, which is one of the admirable features of the Ronga religion (See Part VI).

The widows are truly the most important part of the property

768 left by a man. When they have been distributed, the minor
428 possessions of the deceased are adjudicated. As regards *oxen*,
604 *money*, these have been already remitted to the younger brother or, in his absence, to the sons. The younger brother will use them as family property to buy a wife for his son or for the son of the deceased, when he comes of age. In the distribution of the implements which have been cleansed, but left lying on the ground in front of the hut up to this day, the *ntukulu*, viz. the principal uterine nephew again plays an important part. He has the right of *tjhumba*, viz. of picking out for himself one of the assagais of his uncle, just as the maternal uncle takes (tjhumba) one pound from the lobola money (See Part II). Every warrior possesses at least two assagais ; the big one belongs in principle to the chief, and must be inherited by the eldest son. The nephew takes the smaller one, but he must precede his cousin in choosing ; in appropriating this weapon, he *surrenders* or transmits (nyiketa) the inheritance to the true heirs. This is a very characteristic expression. It seems as if he wished to assert his right ; but he takes the less valuable weapon and leaves the better one to the son. The explanation of this custom is probably to be found in the evolution of the family system which must have taken place amongst the Thongas (See Part II). In fact all the *batukulu* stand in a line and receive a portion of the property of the deceased, a knife, an axe, a small punch, etc. Women never inherit (a ba di
562 phndla). When no heir exists except females, they may receive
428 something, but the valuable property must be kept by them for their sons, the uterine nephews of the deceased. Why ? Because, in the mind of the Thongas, a woman is not capable of possessing ; she is not able to build an oxen kraal and repair it ; how could she possess oxen ? The only thing she can do is to arrange a pig's kraal. Therefore she can own pigs, but nothing else!

768 The end of the feast of the adjudication of the inheritance is the distribution of the flesh of the victims. The company breaks up, each party having received one of the limbs. They must eat it on their way home, somewhere under a tree, on the road ; neither in the mortuary village, nor in their own kraal. It is

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768 taboo. Those who have received a wife go home rejoicing. When he has reached home, the fortunate husband kills a fowl or even a goat to make a fitting reception for his new wife. This is the end of the long period of widowhood, in which it is easy to discover the whole sequence of the passage rites.

783 Such is the old normal way of reinstating a widow in society.
765 But there are special cases where the rites are slightly different. If a widow is old and cannot expect to deceive a man, she simply buys medicines which are supposed to cleanse her.

The case of the wife of Sokis (see page 139, footnote) was more difficult. She had a baby, and sexual relations were consequently prohibited. Moreover the man who legally inherited her was in Johannesburg and could not provide for her purification. One of the grave-diggers took his place and "ran for her" (tjutjumela). This is a different expression for *fambela*. As far as I could understand, this man had ritual relations with his own wife in order to *lahla khombo*, to be purified himself. Then he tied the cotton string (boha nshale) round the waist of the widow. A sick widow will also be treated by *tjutjumela*. The grave-digger possesses the means of cleansing them, having gone through the mourning together with them.

These attenuated processes of purification seem the rule amongst the *Northern clans*. According to Viguet, the widows must also go to the bush (hula ni nhoba) to meet with a man who will free them of the defilement of death. The man who performs this act is called the *shikomho* of the widows. There are certain individuals who make a real business of this. Knowing drugs with which to cleanse themselves (ku tirulula), they claim a reward for their help... The widows remove their mourning attire (bracelets of strings on that occasion), and return home adorned with beads.

768 In the Djonga dialect the adjudication of the inheritance is called
783 *pandja ndjaka*. It is not accompanied by a sacrifice. There seem to be some differences in the ideas of the Rongas and of the Northern clans. For the former the defilement of death contaminates the hut to a greater extent. This must be destroyed, and the widow has to undergo the very hard casting away of misfortune (lahla khombo). For the latter the impurity rests more on the

783 village itself, which must carry out the collective purification of
768 *hlamba ndjaka*.

I must further mention a new custom which is spreading
587 amongst the Ba-Ronga in the neighbourhood of Lourenço
609 Marques. When a widow objects to becoming the wife of the legal
611 inheritor, she goes home and adopts another husband. There are plenty of men of other tribes, coming from Inhambane, Quelimane, Mozambique, who have no wife. They accept the proposal of the widow and go to live in her village. They are generally despised and called by the insulting name of *mugomo*, a Zulu word meaning an empty iron oil-tin. They are as hard and unfeeling as such a tin! If children are born, they belong to the family of the deceased husband, who paid the lobolo.

587 Sometimes also a widow chooses a nephew who is still a child. She gives him food as if she were his wife, but she lives with another man whom she loves. It even happens that she may choose a girl, the daughter of another wife of the deceased. (Annotatio 13.)

C. OLD AGE AND DEATH

888 An old woman, having in some sort gone out from the sexual
782 community, enjoys some privileges which are taboo for her sisters who are still capable of childbearing. She is allowed to put on the clothing of the widows ; contamination of death is not so dangerous for her. She can proceed to the purification of the village, in certain cases of epidemic, and of the weapons of the warriors in war time (Part III). After the sacrifice of the black ram for rain, old women and small girls alone are allowed to eat the flesh of the victim.

462 But old and decrepit women are despised. As long as they
888 can still till their land, they are treated with consideration, but when they have lost all their strength and must be fed by their children, they are looked upon as troublesome burdens. I must say that, as long as she still has an atom of vigour, a Thonga woman goes to her field and tills it. During all her life time

1[See pp. 518-519 in these categories as in 116—Analyst]

764 inhabitants of the kraal. One of them, the saluter (mulosi), goes
604 to meet them and offers them a shilling. They keep silence.
He tells them the news of the village. They do not answer.
He leaves them and comes a second time with a fresh present.
754 Then they consent to tell the news of their home, but they do not enter the village. The same man returns to them a third time with £ 1; they refuse to accept it. He adds 10/. (£ 1.10 is considered the normal sum to be paid as a kind of fine by the widower to the parents of the deceased.) They refuse again : this is an insult! Happily the *ntukulu* is there; he will act as mediator between the two families. The visitors summoned him on their arrival and he has been sitting with them the whole time ; is he not the son of their sister ? But before he went to them, his father has given him his instructions : "Tell them that I have not eaten your mother." The *ntukulu*, as we shall see, is very free with his maternal uncles. He has the right of teasing them, even insulting them. Seeing that they do not accept the money, he stands and gives vent to his grief, throws sand at them, tries to drive them away, weeps. "No! Father has not killed mother! He is not a wizard! She died a natural death!" They see his tears, and then consent to enter the village.

764 In front of the mortuary hut, all the belongings of the deceased
768 wife have been piled up, together with the straw crown of the hut :
595 her pots, plates, baskets, spoons, mortars, etc. The brothers
782 break everything. Should there be any new implements amongst
[578] them, they will perhaps give them to their nieces. Then they lift up the roof of the hut and throw it into the bush. They pick all the plaster from the walls and throw it away where they threw the roof. The sacrifice is then accomplished amidst the ruins of the destroyed hut. Whilst it is being prepared, the women of both families insult each other. The female relatives of the deceased say to the women of the village : "You have killed her because she was a splinter in your eyes" (shilabi). The others answer : "Have you seen us kill her ? Perhaps people do not die with you ?" The *bukwele*, the special jealousy which almost always exists between co-wives, explains how it is possible for them to address such amenities to each other. But the victim is

764 prepared, all the limbs cut off, the portion of the gods set apart. The elder brother of the deceased woman prays in these words : "My sister, go in peace, be not angry ; because we love you, we have come to mourn you to-day. Do not say we have not mourned you. Go to so and so (father, grandfather, etc.), call them here, give us good sleep and good health, etc." The batukulu appropriate the offering and the mourning ends in laughter, dancing and drinking. The neighbours come and take part in the rejoicings.

When they return home, the mourners spend all the mahloko money in buying wine. They sometimes become quite intoxicated. Afterwards both families begin to visit each other again. This custom of the mahloko fine is so strong that converts still adhere to it. But they usually send the money to the wife's family when informing them of the death, and no other ceremony is performed.

In the Northern clans the mahloko are also paid, but it seems that the family of the widower considers that it has the right to claim the repayment of the whole lobolo, when the deceased wife has left no child to compensate for the loss. In Nondwane, though we are still in Ronga territory, when the woman dies shortly after marriage the lobolo must be repaid. Further north the procedure is as follows : the deceased woman is buried by her husband according to the ordinary rules ; one year elapses and a special feast is celebrated, similar to the "beer of mourning" (page 164), in the village of the wife's parents, where both families gather together and provide the necessary victims. It commences with a sacrifice in which the father of the deceased wife squeezes the *psanyi* of the goat on to those present, all the time insulting the gods who have killed his child and made trouble between the two families. He ends with words addressed to the widower's relations : "I cleanse you from your misfortune." The widower's father does the same thing, insulting also his own gods, and every one rubs his body with the green liquid squeezed from the *psanyi*. Then prayer for new blessings is offered and the sacrifice is made, as customary, and the actual discussion as to claims takes place. Each family takes possession of a hut, the widower's family assembling

765 as usual in the house of the deceased wife's mother, and the parley takes place through the go-between (tintjumi), as in the discussions which precede marriage. Let us call the husband's family A and that of the wife B. A sends two hoes to B as a notification : "Your child died with us last year." B answers "All right! Then pay the fine for her head (nhloko). Because you had only bought her legs. Her brain, her head, her name was still ours." A sends five hoes to B, to pay for the brains of the deceased. B takes two of the five and sends them back to A, saying : "One of them is to cleanse you from the misfortune, and we shave your head with the second." A accepts the two hoes and returns home. Should the wife have died childless, there will be a second act to the procedure: A has "opened the door of the claim" (a pfurile nyangwa wa nandju). He will come back shortly to lodge it with B.

587 768 Here he comes. Using his go-between (ntjumi) as a mouth piece, he says to B : "Look at us! We gather our ashes with our own hands and we dig water in small shells of sala,— viz. we have no wife to do this feminine work for us!" It means : "Please give us another wife or repay the money to buy one." If B happens to have a girl of marriageable age, he will say : "Do not kill us ; we put a log of wood across the road" (hi hingakanya ntjandja). This means : "We have put something to prevent you from coming to us as enemies. Here is a new wife for you." A understands quite well and goes home satisfied. He comes back without delay and brings twenty or thirty hoes, which is a beginning of lobola payment. He says : "We thank you for the wife." The girl then follows him at once, if she is of marriageable age ; if not, she stays at home until she is grown up, and during all this time her new husband provides her with clothing. When, having gone to live with him, she gives birth to a child, B comes to A and says : "Nwombekazi a yi ambi nandju," viz. "A cow which has calved is not used to pay a debt," that is to say : she must be paid for herself. This technical expression means therefore : As our daughter has given you posterity, pay the full lobolo for her! A will certainly do it "hi bushaka," on account of the friendly relation existing between B and himself. But if B has no girl to give in compensation, if he has no money, what will happen ? A will

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768 follow his oxen where they have gone, namely into the family of the girl who has been bought by B for one of his sons. This woman is for the widower his great *mukoñwana*, the woman he fears the most in all the tribe. We shall see what will then happen when treating of the extraordinary relations existing between these two individuals. This wonderful story of the consequences of the death of a wife, so characteristically told by Viguet, provides us with an excellent opportunity for transition to Part II of this work, which will explain the relations between all the members of the Thonga family.

586 wives at once. The custom of marrying a wife's tinhlampsa is
582 approved of; it is however not very frequently observed in Thonga
604 families at the present time.
595 Other women to whom a man has a special right are his relatives on the mother's side, as we have seen; to take a wife from the family in which the father found the mother is recommended and approved of as long as she is not too near a relative.

2) The right of inheritance.

587 The second class of cases does not concern unmarried women
835 whom I mean to lobola, but widows whom I may inherit after
768 the death of their husband. Those whom I may eventually inherit
595 are generally called by me *namu* or *nsati*, and I have very free
582 relations with them, but as already pointed out this liberty never goes so far as to allow of sexual intercourse (p. 247). "Ndi nga da," viz. "I can eat, inherit by prior right" *my elder brother's widow*: she is my regular legacy. As regards my younger brother's widow, I can only marry her if she is old and no longer able to bear children. But if she is still a childbearing woman, to take her is very much against the feelings of the tribe. The reason of the prohibition is this, says Viguet: suppose that this widow of my younger brother already has children. I take her, and have a child by her. The child takes precedence of the first children of its mother: he is their *hosi*, because I, myself, the father, am the elder brother of the deceased. On the other hand, he is *ndjisana* of his other brothers, because he was born after them by the same mother. This is impossible; it runs counter to the most elementary notions of the family. In exceptional cases, however, when no one else can claim my younger brother's widow, I may take her.

587 Next to my true tinamu comes *the widow of my maternal uncle*.
768 If he had many, one might be alloted to me in the distribution.
595 But of course, in this as in all other cases of inherited women, the
582 children born of our union would belong to the family who paid the lobolo, and not to me. I have, in a sense, only the usufruct of the property. She will till the fields for me and serve me with

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my daily plate of porridge, but she is not really mine. She is given (nyika) to me by favour, and only under specified conditions. I can also inherit *bakokwana*, the widow of my malume's father (not my true grandmother, of course, but her co-wife), the widow of my father's brothers.

Muhambi can inherit Magugu, *the widow of his cousin* Hlangabeza. This cousin is a brother (makwabu) and the two fathers are brothers. But he could not inherit Debeza, wife of Phusa. Why so? Because Phusa, being a cousin by the father's sister, belongs to another *shibongo*, the shibongo of his own father Muki and not to that of his mother. Should Muhambi lay claim to Debeza, the men of Mashabane (the name of Phusa's clan) would say : "We are opposed to it, because your doing so would in fact mean that you *eat two herds*. You have eaten one herd when we bought Ndjibari from your people. Ndjibari has had two children ; we have sold her daughter Nwashidjasa to lobola Debeza for Phusa. The oxen were ours. If Phusa dies, Debeza belongs to us and not to you." So Muhambi can inherit the widow of his cousin, the son of his paternal uncle, but not the widow of his cousin, the son of his paternal aunt.

A man can inherit also *one of his father's wives*, as we have seen (page 203), but only under certain circumstances. The dlaya shilongo is never performed in the case of inherited women.

A rule on which Viguet insisted, but which is disappearing, is this : women, when their husband had no younger brothers, must be inherited by *batukulu* and not by *bana* ; batukulu, i. e. either true grandsons, sons of the son, or uterine nephews, sons of the sister of the deceased. The reasons for this law are : 1) Bana, sons, would take liberties with their father's wives and make balamo of them, if they could inherit them regularly. This would spoil the life of the village. 2) If I, being ñwana, a son, inherit my father's wife and have a child by her, this child is ñwana, a son, to me. On the other hand, this inherited woman may have had children by my father, and they are my brothers. So, one of this woman's children is my son, the other my brother ! "A beleki tinshaka timbiri." — "She has had children of two generations !" This must not be.

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621 596 833 768 1) *Social rites.* The muti, as we have seen, is a little organised community having its own laws, amongst which the most important seems to be the law of hierarchy. The elder brother is the undisputed master and no one can supersede him. He is the owner of the village. No one must "steal it" from him. Should any one do so, the whole community would suffer and no children would be born ; the life of the organism would be deeply affected. That is the reason why the headman must go first with his principal wife to have relations with her in the new village, and thus *take possession* of it or *tie* it. For this same reason, when the headman dies, the village *must* move. It is taboo to remain in it. Until the inheritance has been distributed, it is still *his home* (kwa kwe) ; but as soon as this ceremony has taken place, the villagers must go away, and close the door with a thorny branch. The part played by the 621 595 562 768 764 principal wife in all these ceremonies is most remarkable. It is absolutely imperative that the headman should "tie the village" with her, and not with another of his spouses. Should she be very old, the law must be observed all the same ; should she be ill, and unable to have sexual relations, the village simply cannot be moved. In the Northern clans we see her taking the shield and the assagai, closing the village and "giving it" to the inmates, even performing a sacrifice and praying to the gods. It is very rare to see a woman presiding at a public religious ceremony ; but she is the owner of the village as well as the headman. Moving is imperative when she dies as well as after the death of the headman. The main gate must also be closed and a new entrance made in the fence to be used during the year of mourning ; in the case of her death, this opening must be made on the left of the regular *mharana*, whilst, when the husband dies, it is made on the right side ; just as in the hut, when the corpse is removed for burial. (See page 138.)

351 789 621 2) *Protective rites.* These are those which concern the fence. This fence does not afford material protection. The branches dry up very soon and, in the case of a bush-fire, for instance, they would do more harm than good. It is a spiritual protection, a barrier of charms, of magic influences, to prevent the entrance of wizards and of all the hostile powers of the bush. We shall understand this better when treating of witchcraft superstitions. (Part VI.)

182 621 829 3) *Passage rites.* The reader will have been surprised to observe amongst the ceremonies of the moving of villages, many features which we have already met with in the circumcision school, or in the mourning customs. At first sight there seems to be no relation whatever between the moving of a village, the initiation of boys and the

753 a state of physiological impurity. Hence the law ordering
164 people affected with any of these kinds of makhumo to eat with
751 spoons ; they thus protect themselves against the poison which might cause them to become consumptive. A curious feature in the conception of *contagion* is the following. When Sokis died (I. p. 139) I heard some of those present saying to his sister, who was carrying a child on her shoulders : "Do not cry! If you cry the disease will jump to your baby!" There were two reasons for this warning ; to cry in the presence of misfortune increases
753 the danger tenfold (compare p. 326) ; moreover the contagion of
768 disease is especially to be feared in connection with the relatives of the sick or dead person. Hence the strange custom illustrated on plate p. 26 : when a man dies of consumption his relatives are absolutely forbidden to eat any of the food he may have left. The "luma milomo" ceremony (I. p. 146) is of no use in this case. In former times all his mealies were burnt. Nowadays, however, it is allowable for people outside his family to buy and consume his provision. The large storehouse, illustrated on p. 26, contained the mealies harvested in Sokis' fields. These were sold to strangers, whilst relatives bought other mealies which were stored in the small hut for the use of his widow and children (p. 111). The same reason no doubt explains why the widow of a consumptive must *lahla khombo* with strangers, and not with men of the village (I. p. 206).

758 This peculiar idea of contagion also gives rise to the rules
766 for *burying lepers*. Their relatives must not have anything to
768 do with the burial (I. p. 508). Relatives-in-law can perform this painful duty, or possibly the family of the deceased leper will ask a friend to help them in their distress. "Have you prepared something as a reward for me?" he asks, and if this is the case he digs a grave just outside the wall of the hut where the patient died, removes the reeds of the wall, and pulls the corpse down into the hole without any funeral ceremony. The relatives are assembled far away on the square, and do not even dare to look on at the burial. All the implements are broken in the depths of the forest, at a great distance, for fear that a relative might touch one of them and die. Or they are left in the hut, and the whole village is at once removed.